



THE SOUTH TEXAS REGIONAL COCORAHS NEWSLETTER

NWS
Corpus
Christi



Summer 2014
Edition

Spring: dry and generally quiet

It has certainly been a dry and quiet year in the South Texas and Coastal Bend region.

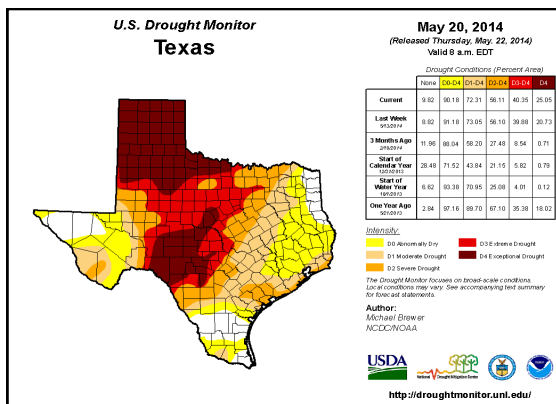
The majority of locations across the region have received well below normal rainfall three out of the first five months of this year. So far this year, with the exception of Webb County, most areas are 4 to 9 inches below normal rainfall levels (See rainfall report Page 2). However, thanks to rains earlier in the fall and winter (November and December), and heavier rains in March 2014, several counties are officially out of the drought.

The U.S. Drought monitor released on May 20th, shows the counties of Webb, Duval, Jim Wells, Kleberg and Nueces to be out of the drought...for now. While the panhandle and much of the Edwards Plateau regions remain in "exceptional drought" stage.

In terms of the spring "severe

weather" season, it has been unusually quiet. Through May 20th, there have been only 13 severe weather (hail of inch diameter or larger or winds of 58 mph or higher) reports across our south Texas region. An average severe weather season would have around 40 reports based on data since 1986.

The two main events of the spring include the Orange Grove storm of April 4th. This storm brought winds of 65 to 70 mph and (*CONTINUED ON PAGE 2*)—>



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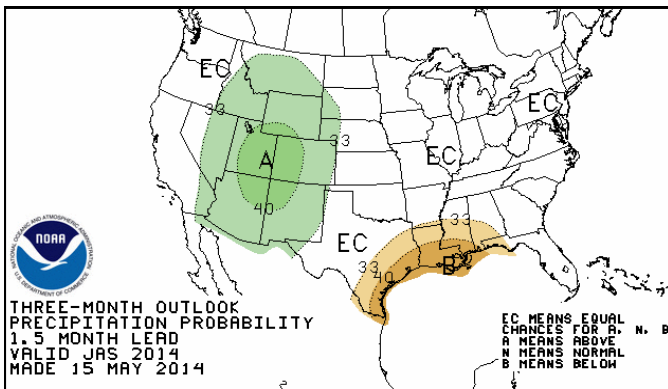
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El Nino: Dry summer; wet winter?

The drought is over temporarily for parts of South Texas thanks to some generous rains in the winter and parts of the spring, but this may be coming to an end.

The waters of the tropical Pacific Ocean continue to warm, pointing to the development of an El Nino pattern this summer. Based on previous summers with a fast developing El Nino, summer looks to be warmer than average and very dry. During the El Nino summers of 2002, 2004, 2006 and 2009, a strong ridge of high pressure developed and parked itself over Texas, ultimately drying

up chances for any significant rainfall during the summer months. The high pressure dome over Texas also blocks any tropical system from moving toward the Texas coast, instead pushing them more southerly into the Mexican coast. Plus, the high pressure (*CONTINUED ON PAGE 2*)—>





(SPRING Page 1)—> hail up to two inches in diameter at around 4:30 am. Nearly 600 homes suffered minor to moderate damage as did numerous vehicles. This storm also brought some hail to areas of far western Nueces County, such as Robstown and Calallen.

The other severe storm hit the Laredo area on May 9th bringing some hail and winds up to 66 mph. The winds snapped trees, damaged gas station canopies and blew over an 18-wheeler on a Laredo freeway overpass.

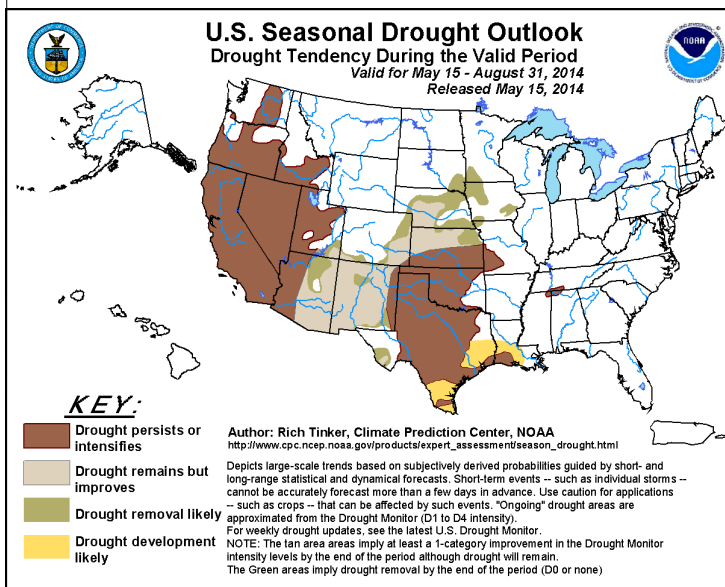
A strong cold front moved through the region on May 13th bringing some non-severe storms and very generous rainfall, with some areas of Victoria, Calhoun, Duval, Webb and Jim Wells Counties receiving 2 to 4 inches of rainfall.

(EL NINO Page 1)—> dome can even provide enough dry air to kill off the tropical system all together.

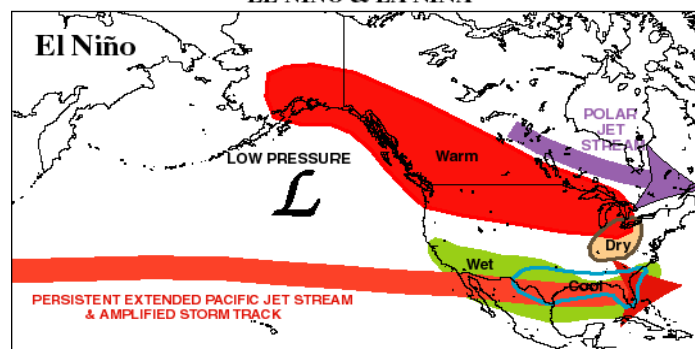
The current outlook from the Climate Prediction Center for the period July-August-September is calling for a 33% chance of above normal temperatures for almost all of the region, as well as a 40% chance of below normal precipitation for the coastal plains.

An analysis of the temperatures during the most recent El Nino summers (2002, 2004, 2006, 2009), August ranked as one of the warmest ever in all years except 2009 for Corpus Christi. August precipitation for each of these years at Corpus Christi was well below normal, though each September was one of the wettest. In general, an El Nino will typically bring drier and warmer summers to south Texas, followed by a cool and very wet winter from November through March.

The wet winter would be great, the hot dry summer would not. Let's hope El Nino is a nice little boy this summer.



TYPICAL JANUARY-MARCH WEATHER ANOMALIES AND ATMOSPHERIC CIRCULATION DURING MODERATE TO STRONG EL NIÑO & LA NIÑA



Regional Rainfall Report

Official NWS Observation Sites

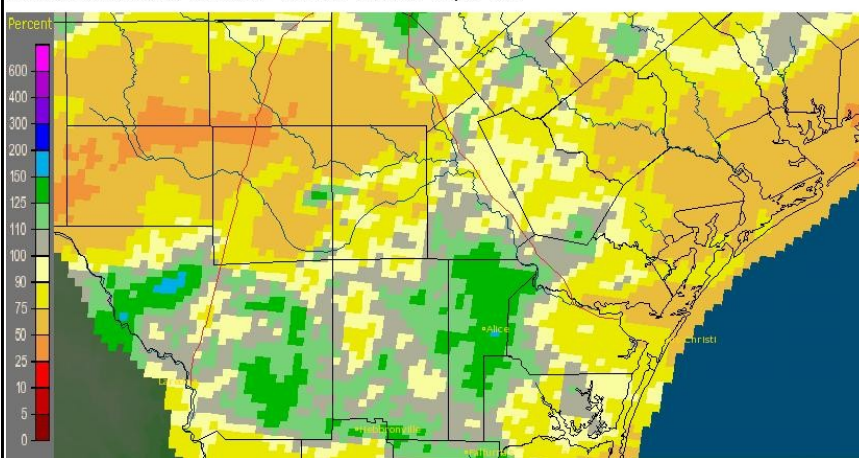
City	2014 rain to date	Departure
Laredo	5.21"	-1.66"
Cotulla	3.92"	-4.86"
Freer	6.39"	-4.10"
Corpus Christi	6.89"	-3.02"
Victoria	11.28"	-4.10"

Selected CoCoRaHS Sites

Station	Location	Rain
TX-JW-6	Orange Grove 3.3 NW	11.22"
TX-LO-5	Choke Canyon Dam N	7.86"
TX-LO-9	George West 2.7 NNW	6.43"
TX-LO-11	George West 2.9 E	9.53"
TX-GD-3	Goliad 2.4 SE	8.81"
TX-BEE-10	Beeville 4.5 NW	10.98"
TX-AR-5	Rockport 0.6 N	6.91"

*Rain totals through 27 May 2014

Corpus Christi, TX (CRP): Current Year to Date Percent of Normal Precipitation
Valid at 5/28/2014 1200 UTC- Created 5/28/14 23:42 UTC



Radar estimation of percent of rainfall received through May 27th as compared to normal. Jim Wells County as well as portions of Webb and Duval are running above normal in rainfall while the Victoria Crossroads region remains well below normal, receiving only 25 to 50% of normal in many cases.



North Carolina wins March Madness

Each year during the month of March, CoCoRaHS leaders challenge each state to see which one can recruit the most new observers.

This year, Texas was not able to defend its national championship title. However, Texas placed third with 130 new observers behind North Carolina's 155 and Florida's 138 new observers. In the "Per Capita" division, Wyoming took top honors once again with 85.16 new observers per capita, with South Dakota a distant second at 35.62.

In the "Per Capita" division, a states rank is determined by calculating the number of new stations per one million resi-

dents. Overall across the nation, a total of 1,098 new volunteers signed up during "March Madness."

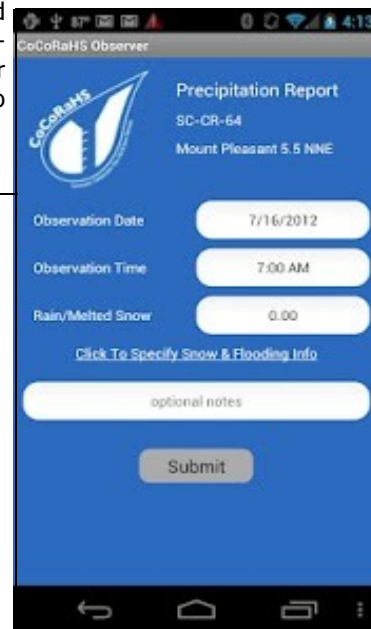
CoCoRaHS continues to get new observers daily, especially with new areas being added, including Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, which join on June 1st.

And remember, just because March Madness is over, it does not mean that new observers can not sign up. New observers are always needed and welcome to sign up at anytime. All that is needed is enthusiasm for the weather and a few minutes each day. For more information on joining log onto www.cocorahs.org.

CoCoRaHS Apps Available

Many of you have been asking about it for years....a way to submit data on your phone. Now....it is here....The CoCoRaHS Observer Android App is now available. Simply go to the Google Play Store and download.

For iPhone users, a CoCoRaHS volunteer recently completed an App for iPhones and is now available for everyone to use.



How is CoCoRaHS doing? Take the survey.

The CoCoRaHS Network has contracted David Heil & Associates, Inc. (DHA), an external evaluation firm, to serve as a program evaluator. This survey is designed to gather feedback from CoCoRaHS participants to document the outcomes and success of the program as well as to guide future development and implementation. By completing this survey, you are providing valuable information that will be used to document outcomes of the program and improve the website and project.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. However, your feedback is very important. You have the right to discontinue the survey at any time

without penalty or explanation. Your participation in the survey indicates that you consent to participate and provide feedback.

Please feel free to contact the evaluator, Kelly Riedinger, at kriedinger@davidheil.com or (503) 245-2102 with any questions or concerns you have regarding this survey.



Tropics 2014: Slow season likely

CoCoRaHS Observers wishing for a tropical storm or hurricane to bring some good rainfall to measure may be out of luck. In their annual outlook for the Atlantic hurricane season, NOAA's Climate Prediction Center (CPC) is forecasting a 50% chance of a below normal season.

The main forecast issue this season is the development of an El Nino in the tropical Pacific Ocean waters. El Nino's will typically cause more and stronger wind shear, essentially tearing apart any system that tries to develop. Plus, El Nino can also increase the trade winds and atmospheric stability across the waters of the tropical Atlantic, making it very difficult for a tropical systems coming off African coast to form and maintain its strength.

This season's outlook calls for 8 to 13 named tropical storms,

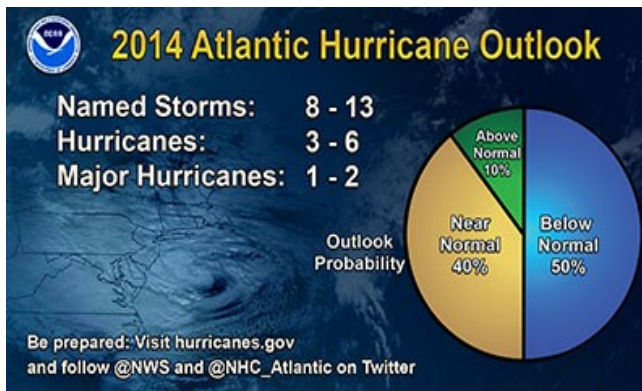
with 3 to 6 hurricanes and 1 to 2 of the hurricanes becoming major hurricanes (winds of 120 mph or higher). Based on the averages from 1981 to 2010, the Atlantic basin would normally have 12 named storms, 6 hurricanes and 3 major hurricanes.

Dr. William Gray, hurricane expert from Colorado State University is also predicting a below normal season, as his outlooks are calling for 9 named storms, 3 hurricanes with only one becoming a major hurricane.

Dr. Gray also cites the development of an El Nino as the reason for a below normal season as well as a water temperatures in the Atlantic Ocean being cooler than normal.

It must be stressed though, that everybody must be prepared

for a big hurricane. It only takes one big storm to make a slow hurricane season look devastating. One example would be in 1992 when Hurricane Andrew developed. In a season of only 4 hurricanes, Andrew strengthened into a Category 5 hurricane that devastated southern Florida with winds of nearly 200 mph, causing \$26 billion in damage, which at the time was the costliest hurricane in history.





Tracking plant and animal responses to weather

Interested in tracking how plants and animals respond to weather and climate change? If so, then the National Phenology Network may be the place for you. Below is some information about the National Phenology Network from the home page at www.usanpn.org.

What we do: The USA-NPN developed [Nature's Notebook](#), a project focused on collecting standardized ground observations of phenology by researchers, students and volunteers. We also foster phenology communities of practice, and the development of tools and techniques to support a wide range of decisions made routinely by citizens, managers, scientists, and others, including decisions related to allergies, wildfires, water, and conservation.

Our mission: The USA National Phenology Network serves science and society by promoting broad understanding of plant and animal phenology and its relationship with environmental change. The Network is a consortium of individuals and organizations that collect, share, and use phenology data, models, and related information.



Photo credits: Brian F. Powell

Our vision: The USA National Phenology Network encourages people of all ages and backgrounds to observe and record phenology as a way to discover and explore the nature and pace of our dynamic world. The Network

makes phenology data, models, and related information freely available to empower scientists, resource managers, and the public in decision-making and adapting to variable and changing climates and environments.

How we're organized: The efforts of the USA-NPN are organized and directed by the staff of the [National Coordinating Office](#) and the 15-member [Advisory Committee](#), as specified in our [Charter](#). The activities of the USA-NPN are funded by several organizations, including the U.S. Geological Survey, National Park Service, The University of Arizona and the National Science Foundation.

How to start a local project/group: If you are interested in what is happening to animal and plant populations in your area, then contact us at: partners@usanpn.org

The PRISM-CoCoRaHS Climate Portal

The PRISM-CoCoRaHS Climate Portal. You are probably wondering what this is. The PRISM Portal is a CoCoRaHS data analysis tool developed in collaboration with the PRISM Climate Group at Oregon State University. This tool is only available to CoCoRaHS observers. It helps connect our daily precipitation measurements (weather) to seasonal patterns, long-term averages and year-to-year precipitation variations (climate). This portal also provides access to estimates of "normal" precipitation for any location in the contiguous United States. The PRISM Portal also provides estimates of total precipitation for each month and year dating

back to 1895.

You can access this portal by logging onto the CoCoRaHS web site, and then clicking on "my account" at the top of the page. Next select the PRISM Portal section and click on the "blue" words PRISM DATA.

Once there you will be able to find the estimated precipitation for any location in the lower 48 states or create a historical time series for monthly and yearly precipitation.





National Weather Service
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Corpus Christi, TX 78406

Public Phone Line: (361) 289-0959 ext. 1
Recorded Forecasts: (361) 289-1861
E-mail: christina.barron@noaa.gov
Juan.alanis@noaa.gov

National Weather Service Mission Statement:

The National Weather Service (NWS) provides weather, hydrologic, and climate forecasts and warnings for the United States, its territories, adjacent waters and ocean areas, for the protection of life and property and the enhancement of the national economy. NWS data and products form a national information database and infrastructure which can be used by other governmental agencies, the private sector, the public, and the global community.

Brief National Weather Service History:

The National Weather Service has its beginnings in the early history of the United States. Weather has always been important to the citizenry of this country, and this was especially true during the 17th and 18th centuries.

The beginning of the National Weather Service we know today started on February 9th, 1870, when President Ulysses S. Grant signed a joint resolution of Congress authorizing the Secretary of War to establish a national weather service.

ON THE WEB!

<http://www.weather.gov/corpuschristi>

CoCoRaHS WxTalk Webinar Schedule

Would you like to learn about the weather and atmosphere from the experts and ask them questions? In 2011, CoCoRaHS kicked off the "CoCoRaHS WxTalk series." The WxTalk consists of a series of monthly one-hour interactive webinars featuring engaging experts from meteorology, climatology and related sciences. Each webinar is about 60 minutes and allows audience members to ask questions to the experts.

Past webinars are archived on the CoCoRaHS home page and can be viewed at anytime. Past topics have included hurricane analysis; wind and wildfires; cloud identification and flash floods. All webinars are free. Registration can be done online through the CoCoRaHS home page.

Upcoming Webinars...

Thursday 24 July 2014 @ 12noon CDT

"Space Weather: What is it and why should you care"
Presented by: Rodney Viereck, Director, Space Weather Prediction Testbed. NOAA/Space Weather Prediction Center, Boulder, Colorado

Thursday 14 August 2014 @12noon CDT

"Weather CSI: Forensic Meteorology"

Presented by: Pam Knox, CCM
Agricultural Climatologist, Crop and Soil Sciences Dept.
College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences
University of Georgia-Athens, GA

Thursday 25 September 2014 @ 12noon CDT

"The day in the life of a NWS Forecast Office"

Presented by: John Gordon, National Weather Service forecast office, Louisville, KY

Thursday 23 October 2014: Atmospheric Rivers

Thursday 13 November 2014: The National Operational Hydrologic Remote Sensing Center.

